7: Speck E-5 (1928-1932) 1937 NM7 Delaware NM7
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large. It is, then, to one of the religious men of the tribe, *Wi·tapano'xwe*, "Walks by Daylight" (C. J. Webber), the joint author of the text study of the Big House, supplemented with the cooperation of *Ni·'ka'ni·paxoxwe*, "Walking in Advance, Leader" (Joe Washington), and *Kwutc'pagi·'kamen*, "Rustling Leaves (when walking)" (George T. Anderson), that we owe the narration of this series of texts explaining the procedures themselves and the traditions of their origin (Plate 1).

Some of them, for instance the Grease Drinking Ceremonies and the Doll Dance, are family properties handed down as obligations within the family group from some past period when the responsibility for their enactment was incurred through the event of some long-forgotten individual undergoing experience with a spirit in human or animal form. These have developed among the Delawares into septs inheriting the obligation to perform them corresponding to the motives actuating rites of similar derivation in several other parts of North America.

In the history of Delaware institutions of the kind there is reason to suppose that the minor ceremonies, perhaps those passed on through generations within the family groups, may indeed be older than the Big House Ceremony. The fact that in the Big House certain rites appear to have been added and others to have been dropped off as time went on would show that the great celebration has integrated through the coalition of originally separate elements. Its comprehensiveness and its thoroughly worked-out cosmological philosophy seem to denote this. The formative elements themselves, then, may be those which we have here, the minor rites performed by smaller social groups, the families, perhaps the villages under the old social system when the tribe resided undisturbed by an European invasion in the east, and those conceived by certain individuals as an outcome of their personal revelations. These bear indication of being prior developments entering into the composition of the dominating and communal Big House Ceremony. Keeping pace with the dwindling devotion of the Delawares to the rites of the Big House, the individual and

IMPORTANCE OF THE DREAM VISION IN DELAWARE CURING

787 The dream vision[1] is of paramount importance in the life of the Delaware. This supernatural visitation is experienced during childhood, or less frequently, at the age of maturity. More commonly it occurs during the fast-vigil of a youth at puberty, alone in the forests searching for a spirit guardian (Benedict, 1923). It is usually to such individuals, considered by the Spirit-forces to be spiritually and morally pure, that this great blessing is bestowed. The gift is not restricted to the male but supernatural power granted to a girl is usually of lesser force. It is said, however, that women, through spiritual guidance, are more adept as a rule in the art of preparing and administering herb medicines than men. Occasionally a man has been blessed with a vision that gives him power to become an herb doctor. (Wítapanóxwe became proficient in that field as will become evident in a subsequent narrative.

Not always is the revelation experienced in a dream. The neophyte may be walking alone in the woods, or even in a situation of apparent danger when the presence of the spiritual agent is made known to him. A voice from a rock, a bird, an animal or even the sky is recognized, as the medium through which the coveted power is conveyed to the fortunate one. Occasionally a song is granted to the novice during the visitation. This bequest is regarded as personal property to be used exclusively by the owner during participation in the ceremonies of the Big House or in practicing healing with herbs or in the sweat-lodge.

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To receive such a revelation from the Creator means much to a Delaware. It affords the assurance of spiritual guidance in all things, thus giving him confidence to go afield and to face whatever adversities may come into his life without fear.

To those whom the Creator has entrusted with this great gift comes the full realization of the necessity of fulfilling certain obligations. The dream-vision is not divulged until a man reaches maturity and comes to feel that he is capable of appearing before his tribesmen as one who has had sufficient experience in life to avoid incurring criticism

[1] Zeisberger "To the dreams they appeal for in them they have much faith." See also: *Ibid*, p. 25, Harrington (1921, p. 61). "The most vital and intimate phase of Lenape religion is the belief in dreams and visions, and in the existence of personal guardian spirits or supernatural helpers—concepts of wide distribution among the North American tribes, but rarely so vivid or well-developed as we find them here."

4: Tantaquidgeon E-5 (1930) 1942
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of the variety required, he does not gather it [11] but performs a ritual to appease the Spirit of the plant. A small hole is dug towards the east near its base and a small quantity of native tobacco [12] placed within. The herbalist then lights his pipe and smokes, meanwhile making the following appeal to the Creator and to the Spiritual forces which govern vegetation. The songs and properties are regarded as personal property and the accompanying medicine-gathering prayer of Witapanóxwe is regarded as typical.

MEDICINE GATHERING PRAYER (free translation)

"Grandfather, I come now for medical treatment. Your grandson (name of suppliant) needs your aid. He is giving you a smoke-offering here of tobacco. He implores you that he will get well because he, your child, is pitiful. And I myself earnestly pray that you take pity on him the sick one, I wish for him to get well forever of that which is causing pain in his body. For with you alone rests the spiritual power sufficient to bless anyone with, and hear now him our Grandfather tobacco, I beg of him that he will help me when we plead with earnest heart that you will take pity on your grandchild and that you will accept this appeal. I am thankful, Grandfather, also Creator, that you grant our appeal this day for all that we ask.[13] I am thankful, Grandfather. That is enough for this time."

Upon the conclusion of this propitiatory rite the medicine person searches out another plant of the same species, which if clean and healthy-looking, is then gathered. It is now ready to be treated in accordance with the rules governing the preparation of roots and herbs in the accompanying pharmacopeia. If the root of a plant is to be used in making medicine, it is gathered at the season when the vital properties are present; similarly the stalk or leaves each are gathered at the proper seasons.

[11] Harrington (1921, p. 26) in reference to the manitowuck to whom the Indians pray, says, "These are mentioned in the ritual of the Annual Ceremony and the people often pray to them when gathering herbs or preparing medicines, at the same time offering tobacco." He also says (p. 51) that, ". . . Some seem to have prayed to the four directions, other to the presiding genius of the species of the plants they sought or to the spirit of the individual plant itself."

[12] "Real tobacco" (Nicotiana rustica), to which a Delaware term meaning, "our grandfather," is also given.

[13] The proper phrase in full is, "give us what we ask for." It is abbreviated here to suit the formula.

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[796] and women, and a man was selected to cook the hog, and another to supply wood and to cut the poles for swinging the kettle, both of whom were paid with a yard of wampum. The fire was kindled with a special flint-and-steel always kept with the outfit.

"It will be observed that the otter-skin has a slit down the middle of the neck, through which the owner thrust his head in such a manner that the otter's nose lay under the wearer's chin, while its body and tail hung down his back. Wearing the skin in this manner himself impersonating the original otter, the owner would open the ceremony by walking about the fire, chanting and shaking the turtle rattle which resembled those used in the Big House, while the audience kept time to his song by uttering 'Hu-hu-hu-hu!' The nature of the song the writer was unable to learn, but, like the chants of the Bear Ceremony, it probably was concerned with the singer's 'dream helper.' When he had finished, another man put on the skin and took up the chant, and so on until noon the next day, when the ceremony was brought to a close and all joined in the feast. At this time the skin is told, 'We will feed you again in two years.'"

In regard to the Grease Drinking, or Otter, Ceremony, we have the following historical notes to add from the testi-
[424] mony of Tom Half Moon. The last time that the ceremony was performed (1898) it was done in behalf of his mother, Lizzie Half Moon of the Turkey group, in whose family the rite was an hereditary one coming down through her father, the previously mentioned Col. Jackson. Jackson acquired the privilege to perform it through his wife whose great-
[755] grandfather is said to have been its originator. His mother, it seems, was at the point of death, whereupon it was decided as a last resort to try a cure through the Otter Ceremony. Shortly after its completion, however, the afflicted woman died. Upon the failure of the rite it was decided to abandon it upon the assumption that it was valuable only to the women of an earlier generation of the Nation's history. Half Moon, who was present at its performance, corroborated the details
[346] previously recorded, affirming that the celebration was carried on within a brush enclosure or fence and not covered over at the top. He recalled how each one among those present took a little drink of grease, throwing the rest of his or her portion into the fire. The portions were offered to the participants by the leader or master of ceremonies.

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A Grease Drinking Ceremony was also possessed and celebrated in the family of Mrs. Jim (Sally) Thompson. As performed by this family the master of ceremonies wore a whole otter-skin suspended upon his back, the otter's head upon his breast in the manner described by Harrington in his section on the Otter Ceremonies. Half Moon thought that the otter skin in the Museum of the American Indian (Heye Foundation) was the one formerly belonging to this family.

A word seems to be called for in explanation of the confusion existing in the descriptions we have of the two preceding ceremonies, namely, the Bear or Brush Arbor rite and the Otter rite of the Grease Drinking Ceremony. The similarity of procedure in both cases and the conflicting testimony as regards the style of making the enclosure in which the celebration was carried out, are perplexing enough to cause the Indians as well as the several authorities who have quoted them to be accused of error. My attempt to straighten out the circumstances by questioning the Delawares themselves in Oklahoma resulted in partially clearing up the difficulty. It seems that type ceremonies similar in performance as regards function and general procedure, were customary properties among those families who possessed them either through inheritance or through direct acquisition by the visitation of spirits. In each family possessing a ceremony the details of arrangement and of paraphernalia differed somewhat. Therefore, when we record the traditional narrative of the ceremony as performed by the family of Col. Jackson we get the details that were characteristic of the rite as the particular rules of this family required it to be performed. Again, when the Thompson family, for instance, celebrated its grease-drinking feast the procedure was conducted as tradition had conveyed it in the past through the generations within that family. Again, in one family the ceremony would center about the myth of its relationship with the bear, whence the Bear rite as recorded in the previous chapter. Moreover, in different branches of the family in which the Bear rite was inherited, there could be variations in the procedure and the equipment,

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THE OPOSSUM DANCE CEREMONY

Another family feast rite was *op·i'ỵk·a·n*, "Opossum Dance," also known by a sobriquet *suk'ce'p'ti·e'xk·a·n*, literally "black rump dance." For the latter designation no definite reason is given beyond stating that the woman who "owned" the dance and who took the leading part went through bodily movements supposed to represent the motions of an opossum in the throes of death. This was an inherited dream-revelation ceremony, owned by the descendants in the female line, of a woman who had long ago experienced a dream manifestation which imposed upon her and her posterity the obligation to perform the rite as an expiation for the benevolence of the animal that had appeared to her in vision form. Its procedure follows, as we shall see, the manner of the Big House Ceremony, in conformity with the definite Delaware pattern of religious performance.

The woman in this case was also a dame of tradition. The last time the ceremony was celebrated was during the early life of Wi·tapano'xwe's mother by a certain Mi·ma'ndi·, "Little Child," who had the distinction of being the last owner of the rite. Wi·tapano'xwe's mother had seen the ceremony enough to have been able to imitate in part the songs sung by Mi·ma'ndi·.

The Opossum Dance was, as previously noted, one of spiritual significance. It was opened with an address by a chief of another group and concluded with a feast. It was not known particularly as a ceremonial group- or clan-feast, although it was the possession of women in a definite family, and so may be said to be restricted to "clan" proprietorship. The singers were invited by the owner and chosen from members of the group with which she stood in a joking relationship, the group of her father. The accompaniment was provided by the water-drum, said to have been a clay pot with a hide stretched over its mouth. The singers occupied the usual place for musicians at one side of the dance area or